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Traveling Companions

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Traveling Companions

If each of us were going to travel with one or two companions, whom would we choose? Our choices may vary, depending upon the purpose for our journey, and on the many kinds of relationships that we have with others.

A soldier going on patrol in Iraq will not be taking along any family members. Someone going to a church might want to take along a friend who regularly attends religious services, or might invite someone whom he or she thinks would be open to a new experience. Two or three persons might agree that they would be better off traveling together rather than separately, especially if they have mutual interests in making the trip.

The selection of traveling companions reflects and complements the focus of our journey. If we want to have someone hear our reactions as we go sight-seeing, we will invite a good listener. If we want to learn about some places new to us, we might ask those who are knowledgeable about them to come with us. If our intended journey is to explore some of our own interior, we would not seek an opinionated person, but someone who will respect the delicate nature of such an endeavor.

Those who are looking for God might travel to some physically distant place, "to the guru on the mountain top," but will probably make the most part of their journey right where they live. We might want to invite a guide to go with us, someone who has experience of the territory. Others might want to proceed with one or more fellow seekers. Even though the relationship with God is quite personal and individual, the journey towards God is either in company with others or it is not a journey towards God.

God draws and invites us to seek for a closer personal relationship, but always in various forms of companionship. We discover the Spirit of God within ourselves, often in moments of solitude. But the Spirit within us is the same Spirit at the heart of every other person, graciously drawing us all into unity. Even a religious hermit or a prisoner held in solitary confinement has had previous experiences of other persons. Each one of us remains connected with others to the degree that we find God on our journey.

By consciously choosing companions for our journey, we will travel with increased security of finding God and being found by God. If we

talk to others about our desires and our quest, we will come to articulate it for ourselves more clearly. When we share our journey in trust with one or more persons, we will hear not only their responses and experiences, but find ourselves more animated to continue traveling. We draw on one another's energy, and, more deeply, we are drawn together by the God we seek. In truth, we are traveling companions with God.